

Interagency Cooperation With Other Agencies And Entities

Cooperative Agreements with Private Non-Profit Vocational Rehabilitation Service Providers

Makeup of CRPs

Due to the geographic realities which exist within South Dakota, the Divisions of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) and Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired (SBVI) recognize one of the best sources available for the provision of rehabilitation services are community rehabilitation programs (CRP). CRPs consist of Adjustment Training Centers, Mental Health Centers, Career Learning Centers, Job Shops, Independent Living Centers, Communication Services for the Deaf, and the Rehabilitation Center for the Blind. These programs are located in local communities throughout the state.

Utilization of CRPs

During Federal Fiscal Year 1998, 25% of the Division of SBVI's client services expenditures (approximately \$150,000) were to CRP's. Similar expenditure levels are projected for FFY 2000.

Manner in which cooperative arrangements are established

The Division has some contractual agreements with private nonprofit community rehabilitation programs. These contracts are outcome based and have been designed to assist some of the CRP's to transition from grant funding and as a means to streamline services for individuals with mental illness. The majority of services purchased by the Division from CRPs are directly from the vocational rehabilitation counselor utilizing an authorization process. The amount of services purchased depends upon the amount and type of services needed by a consumer. Agencies eligible to receive authorizations must be approved vendors and must be current service providers of the Department or have CARF Accreditation.

Grants and contracts to CRPs

To help expand the capacity and effectiveness of community rehabilitation programs, the Division of SBVI has provided to community rehabilitation programs, establishment grants and service contracts. These activities consisted of the following:

- Program to train individuals with disabilities to make informed choices and direct their own rehabilitation program.
- Service contract to serve individuals with mental illness focusing on employment outcomes.
- Service contract providing transitional employment services for individuals with mental illness. The transitional employment is time-limited to six months and provided in a business setting in the community.

Findings of assessment of capacity and effectiveness of CRPs

On April 30, 1997, the Divisions of SBVI and DRS sent a memorandum to the Community Rehabilitation Programs inquiring as to their needs to be able to serve more consumers in competitive community employment. Following are the key comments addressed through their responses:

- Exploring different models for supported employment.
- Availability and the amount of long-term funding.
- Need to consolidate job development activities with local service providers.
- Improvement in transitional services for students with disabilities.
- Training for staff on Social Security Administration SSI, SSDI and Work Incentives.
- Incentives for employers in hiring individuals with disabilities.
- Work experience programs/services for individuals with mental illness.
- Need to improve the non employment supports to ensure continued success on the job.
- Need for employment retention .